Opposition to construction of Jetties at Bhaitarkanika Sanctuary in Orissa

1282. SHRI B. K. HARIPRASAD: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the strong opposition mounted by environment protection lobby in Orissa to check the Orissa Government's move to construct jetties at the Bhaitarkanika Sanctuary for development of fisheries in a chronically impoverished region;

(b) wheher Government have examined the green lobby's viewpoint aimed to ensure protection and survival of endangered Oile ridley turtles in their premeval habitat;

(c) whether Government are going to succumb to green-lobby's pressure, thereby denying additional income generation opportunities to the fisher-folk in the area through development of jetty facilities;

(d) what is being done by Government that even after 34 years since laying foundation stone by Jawaharlal Nehru the Sardar Sarovar Project is nowhere near take-off in the face of dogged opposition from green-lobbies, thereby denying the residents of Southern Gujarat liberation from water-starvation and an economic transformation; and

(e) whether Government would put due weightage for poverty alleviation programme over environmental protection?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI KAMAL NATH): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. A large number of individuals and organisations have written to the Government opposing the construtions of jetties in the Bhiterkanika Sanctuary which is a very important wildlife refuge, particularly as a habitat for the endangered Olive Ridley Turtles. The view point expressed in these representations is generally justified because such activities are in-consistent with the objectives of development and management of a wildlife sanctuary. A team of officers from this Ministry had visited the sanctuary and recommended against construction of the jetties, roads and bridges. Accordingly, the matter has been taken up with the State Govt. of Orissa to suspend all such construction work pending receipt of the report of Environmental Impact Assessment. Wildlife Institute of India, Dehradun, has also initiated a study on the marine turtles in the area.

(c) There is no question of succumbing to any pressure because only such activities which are consistent with the objectives of a wildlife protected area can be allowed by the Chief Wildlife Warden of the State . The case of Bhitarkanika Sanctuary is presently subjudice in the High Court of Orissa.

(d) The Sardar Sarovar project was accorded environmental clearance in June, 1987 with a number of safeguard measures for environmental protection. The proposal was subsequently approved by the Planning Commission and the project is presently under execution.

(e) Goernment always endeavours to give due weightage to the respective needs of poverty alleviation as well as environmental protection, and the two concepts are not always mutually antagonistic The constant attempt is to strike a harmonious balance between the two.

Industrial Pollution in Gujarat

1283. SHRI RAJUBHAI A. PARMAR: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) the name and number of sugar units and other industrial units causing pollution in Gujarat, stating the location thereof: